

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this Application in view of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-22 remain pending in the present Application. Copies of complete documents submitted along with the IDS of August 25, 2004 are attached herewith in accordance with the Examiner's request. No new matter is added.

By way of summary, the Official Action presents the following issues: Claims 1-22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as lacking novelty over Japanese Publication No. JP 61-178160 or JP 05-174029; Claims 1-13 and 18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being obvious over Kudo (U.S. Patent No. 6,343,238) in view of JP 61-178160 or JP 05-174029; and Claims 14-17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being obvious over Kudo (U.S. Patent No. 6,343,238) and JP 61-178160 or JP 05174029, in further view of Uchida et al. (U.S. Publication No. 2001/0023376 A1, hereinafter Uchida).

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Official Action has rejected Claims 1-22 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being unpatentable over Japanese Publication No. 61-178160 or 05-174029. The Official Action states that either of these references disclose all of the claim limitations of the rejected claims. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection. Claim 1 recites, *inter alia*, a management system managing either of production in a factory and distribution in a warehouse, including:

“ . . . a large-scaled display that displays the instruction and the actual condition stored in said storage device, thereby showing the instruction and the actual condition to a workforce in the predetermined storehouse without delay,

wherein said large-scaled display is located at a specific position which allows each worker of the workforce to simultaneously recognize the display and the article on the worker's flow line in the predetermined storehouse.”

JP 61-178160 describes a production line monitoring system for use by workers along a periphery of a production line. The monitoring system includes a large-scale display which displays information by way of characters or symbols large enough to be viewable from a location along a periphery of the line.¹ The large-scale display is disposed at a position allowing each worker checking equipment along the production line to stand up and look at the display easily over the equipment or to move a few steps and look at the display easily from the side of the equipment.²

JP 05-174029 describes a single large-scale display board (1) for the entire production line for a plurality of operation groups. The large-scale display is disposed at a location that allows each worker to view the display.³

Conversely, the exemplary embodiment of the Applicants' invention and as presently recited in Claim 1, provides a display system by which individual members of a production work force can retrieve information seamlessly during production, without interruption, so as to gauge their performance for enhancing production and promoting cooperation among members of the workforce. A large-scale display is located at a specific location which allows workers to simultaneously recognize the display and the articles on the flow line.

JP 61-178160 does not disclose or suggest that a large-scale display, which is recognizable simultaneously with an article on each worker's flow line. The display of JP 61-178160 is viewable for a worker working at a specific position by stopping work temporarily to change his/her viewpoint or direction of his/her sightline. Likewise, JP 05-174029 describes the display of a production target for notification to each worker by displaying data on screen (10a) of the large-scale display board.⁴ Thus, data of each

¹ See JP 61-178160 at pages 2-3.

² See JP 61-178160 at page 3.

³ See JP 05-174029 at paragraph 3.

⁴ See JP 05-174029 at paragraph 16.

operation and/or entire production line is displayed on the screen in order for each worker to check the data. There is no disclosure or suggestion to display information of articles in each worker's flow line.

As Claims 6, 9, 14, 19 and 20-22 recite substantially the same limitations as discussed above, these claims, as well as any claims depending therefrom, are likewise allowable. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of Claims 1-22 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 be withdrawn.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Official Action has rejected Claims 1-13 and 18 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being obvious over Kudo in view of JP 61-178160 or JP 05-174029. The Official Action states that Kudo discloses all of the Applicants' claim limitations with the exception of a large-scale display. The Official Action cites JP 61-178160 or JP 05-174029 as disclosing this more detailed aspect of the Applicants' claims and states that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings of these references to arrive at the Applicants' claimed invention. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Kudo describes a system for providing information regarding production. A host computer (12) processes information provided thereto from a first input means (14). The input means provides information as to a quantity of materials received by a production stage of a mass production line, a quantity of materials remained unprocessed at a production stage of a mass production line for a production of a production lot, and a quantity of finished products shipped from a production stage of a mass production line for production of a production lot. A first output means (18) is provided for outputting the results of the host

computer.⁵ As shown in Figure 3 of Kudo, information processed by the host computer is displayed at display (18) in histogram form such that it can be employed by a manager in charge of the management of a mass production line to ascertain the state of production.⁶

Kudo does not disclose a large-scale display in accordance with Applicants' Claim 1.

As discussed above, neither JP 61-178160 or JP 05-174029 disclose a large-scale display in accordance with Applicants' Claim 1. Thus, Kudo does not remedy the deficiency discussed above and independent Claims 6 and 9 recite substantially the same limitations as discussed above, Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 1, 6 and 9, and any claims depending therefrom, is allowable over the references of record. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of Claims 1-13 and 18 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 be withdrawn.

The Official Action has rejected Claims 14-17 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being obvious over Kudo, JP 61-178160 or JP 05-174029 in further view of Uchida. The Official Action states that Kudo and JP 61-178160 or JP 05-174029 disclose all the Applicants' claim limitations with the exception of a network for transmitting information. The Official Action cites Uchida as disclosing this more detailed aspect of the Applicants' invention and states that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the teachings of the cited references to arrive at the Applicants' claimed invention. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

As discussed above, neither Kudo, nor JP 61-178160 or JP 05-174029, disclose or suggest all the elements of the pending claims. Further, Uchida does not disclose or suggest the features recited in the claims as outlined above. This combination of Kudo, JP 61-178160 or JP 05-174029 and Uchida cannot possibly be asserted as disclosing or suggesting

⁵ Kudo at column 7, line 56 through column 8, line 10; Figure 2.

⁶ Kudo at column 9, lines 4-12.

Applicants' Claim 14, which includes the above-distinguished limitations. Likewise, Claims 15-17 are allowable at least by their direct and/or indirect dependency on Claim 14.

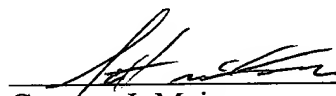
Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of Claims 14-17 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

Accordingly, in view of the foregoing Amendment and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present Application, including Claims 1-22, is patently distinguished over the prior art, is in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested at an early date.

Respectfully submitted,

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